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Message Text

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: OVIP (KISSINGER, HENRY A.)
SUBJECT: JIM HARTZ INTERVIEW WITH RONALD ZIEGLER ON"TODAY SHOW,"FEBRUARY 13, 1975.

FOR AMB. ANDERSON FROM S/PRS.

FOLLOWING ARE EXCERPTS OF INTERVIEW JIM HARTZ OF THE"TODAY SHOW" PROGRAM HAD WITH RONALD ZIEGLER THIS MORNING.

MR. HARTZ: RON, LAST WEEK ON THIS BROADCAST CHARLES COLSON QUOTED FORMER PRESIDENT NIXON AS SAYING HENRY KISSINGER WAS AT TIMES UNSTABLE AND HE ALSO SAID IT WOULD TAKE FORD TWO YEARS TO GET UP TO SPEED ON THE PRESIDENCY. COLSON SAID THAT HE TALKED IN THESE TERMS WHEN HE WAS THINKING ABOUT RESIGNING IN DECEMBER 1973.

ZIEGLER -- IT IS A MISINTERPRETATION TO THINK OR SAY THAT PRESIDENT NIXON CONSIDERED RESIGNING OR CONTEMPLATED RESIGNATION IN DECEMBER 1973. I SAW HIM ALMOST DAILY THEN AND I KNOW FOR A FACT THAT HE DID NOT.

HARTZ -- HAS FORMER PRESIDENT NIXON IN ANY WAY EXPRESSED HIS CONFID"NCE IN PRESIDENT FORD AND SEC. KISSINGER NOW?
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ZIEGLER -- I KNOW THAT PRESIDENT NIXON WAS VERY CONCERNED ABOUT THE IMPRESSION OF THE LAST FEW DAYS THAT HE DID NOT HAVE CONFIDENCE IN PRESIDENT FORD AT THE TIME HE WAS VICE PRESIDENT. HE DID. PRESIDENT FORD HAS NOT ONLY THE RESPECT OF FORMER PRESIDENT NIXON BUT ALSO HE FEELS THAT PRESIDENT FORD HAS TAKEN A HOLD OF THE OFFICE. I WENT INTO THE PRESIDENT'S OFFICE, FORMER PRESIDENT NIXON'S OFFICE, ON SATURDAY AND HE WAS JUST HANGING UP THE PHONE AND HE TOLD ME THAT HE HAD CALLED PRESIDENT FORD TO AGAIN EXPRESS HIS CONFIDENCE IN HIM, TO MAKE SURE THAT HE UNDERSTOOD THAT AT NO TIME DID HE DOUBT HIS ABILITY. YOU KNOW THEY HAVE BEEN FRIENDS FOR A NUMBER OF YEARS AND HAVE ALWAYS HAD A GREAT DEAL OF RESPECT FOR ONE ANOTHER; BUT HE WANTED TO MAKE IT CLEAR TO FORD THAT HE FEELS, AS I SAID, THAT HE HAS TAKEN HOLD OF THE OFFICE AND IS DOING A A GOOD JOB AND THAT HE HAS HIS SUPPORT.

HARTZ: DID HE CALL SECRETARY KISSINGER AS WELL?

ZIEGLER: YES, HE DID. HE CALLED KISSINGER ON SUNDAY BEFORE HE LEFT FOR THE ME TO WISH HIM WELL ON HIS VERY IMPORTANT TRIP TO THE ME, THE NEGOTIATIONS WHICH ARE SO IMPORTANT TO THAT AREA OF THE WORLD AND SO IMPORTANT TO THE U.S., AND THEY KNOW ONE ANOTHER WELL ENOUGH.

HARTZ: WILL WE EVER SEE HIM AGAIN? DO YOU THINK THAT HE WILL BE OUT MAKING SPEECHES OR SUBMIT TO TV INTERVIEWS OR WILL WE HAVE TO WAIT FOR HIS MEMOIRS?

ZIEGLER: I THINK IT IS REALLY TOO SOON TO SAY. HE IS NOT, AS WAS RECORDED, PLANNING A POLITICAL COMEBACK. THE ONLY COMEBACK HE IS PLANNING NOW IS TO REGAIN HIS HEALTH SO HE CAN BEGIN WORK ON HIS MEMOIRS. I HAVE NEVER HEARD HIM TALK ABOUT WANTING TO BE AN AMBASSADOR. I KNOW HE WOULD NEVER ACCEPT AN AMBASSADORIAL POST; HE SAID THAT TO ME.

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